

Miss Hibbard's First Year in Japan : The Start of a Remarkable Missionary Career

Yasuyo EDASAWA

Abstract

The aim of this paper is twofold: to depict why an American woman, the late Dr. Esther Lowell Hibbard, the first president of Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts, decided to be a missionary to Japan, and to explore how she settled into life in Kyoto during her first year, from September 1929 to August 1930. Although her autobiography and other related commemorative books have been published, Dr. Hibbard's true character has not yet been captured. Based on personal letters addressed to her family, which have been kept at the archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society, with other original references, I would like to look at her from a different perspective, focusing on her life as a woman missionary. This paper is a beginning step in my Hibbard research, which will be continued to include her whole life.

I. Introduction

Dr. Esther Lowell Hibbard (1903-1999), or "Miss Hibbard" as many Japanese called her, was the first president of Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts, in Kyoto, Japan. Holder of a Ph.D. from the University of Michigan, she also received honorary doctorates of humane letters from Doshisha University in 1975 and Doshisha Women's College in 1997, and was decorated with the Third Order of the Sacred Treasure by the Japanese government in 1973.

Her contributions to Doshisha and as well her influence on people outside the Doshisha community as an educational missionary by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (hereafter, American Board).¹ were truly profound. Besides her Christian influence and her teaching skills, she was a role model of a modern independent woman.

In spite of her fame as the first president of Doshisha Women's College, Dr. Hibbard's true character has not been well known even among her close friends and students. This is partly because she did not talk about herself much and partly because she wore so many different hats, as a language teacher, a researcher, a textbook writer, a magazine editor, a students' counselor, a church board member, a lover of Japanese culture, etc., that it was almost impossible for people to form a complete picture of her. Although her autobiography and some books to commemorate her have been published, in order to know Esther Hibbard well, it is important to re-visit primary sources and shed new light on her life and influence.

The main reference I used is a large bundle of personal letters Esther wrote to her family. The letters are stored in the archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, Wisconsin, under the title "Carlisle V. Hibbard Papers, 1811-1954."² Other references are her autobiography, and documents related to herself and her parents, most of which are in the archives of the Historical Society and in the University Archives and Records Management Services of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I also used books and documents related to Doshisha, the YMCA, and other institutions which help to explain her family background and the times around the 1920s, when Miss Hibbard received her education and matured as a young woman.

This short paper will examine how Miss Hibbard settled into life in

Kyoto during her first year at Doshisha from September 1929 to August 1930 as the first stage of her missionary life in Japan. Her remaining life will be examined in a later paper. First, I will lay the groundwork by sketching in her family background and education, and then proceed onto her life in Kyoto.

II. Ancestry and Early Education

Family Background

Esther Lowell Hibbard, the eldest child of Mr. and Mrs. Carlisle V. Hibbard, was born in Tokyo on September 23, 1903, a year after Carlisle and his wife Susie came to Japan, where Carlisle worked as secretary of the American YMCA. Carlisle taught English and Bible at the YMCA, and Susie also taught English and Bible to adult Japanese at home. Esther had two brothers, Lowell (1904-1909) and Russell (1909-1965).

In 1908 Carlisle was asked to move to Dairen (now Dalian), Manchuria to support the Dairen YMCA. At the same time, he was asked to help Japanese soldiers and Russian prisoners have a better living environment in the battlefields of the Russo-Japanese War. In all the Hibbards lived in Japan and Manchuria for 12 years. Every summer they returned to the mountains of Karuizawa, Japan, for vacation.

Esther's paternal grandfather was Daniel Osmer Hibbard (1851-1921), a principal of schools in Wisconsin, Nebraska and Tennessee. The *Educational History of Wisconsin* (1921), describes him as "... very popular as an institute conductor, both in Wisconsin and in Nebraska. He has a clear insight into the problems of modern education. School organization and administration have been his lifelong topics of interest and study" (p. 614).

Daniel and his wife (Ida Florella Brightman Hibbard, 1854-1916) had three sons, Carlisle, Darrell, and Clarence (the latter also known by his middle name, Addison), all of whom graduated from the University of Wisconsin. Both Carlisle and Darrell worked for the YMCA. Carlisle, after returning to the States, became associate general secretary for the YMCA War Council and later general secretary of the University YMCA at the University of Wisconsin. Darrell became general secretary at the Greece YMCA. Clarence became dean of the College of Liberal Arts at Northwestern University, in Evanston, Illinois.

Carlisle met his future wife, Susie Eugenia Lowell, in college. He was president of the University YMCA for two years, and she was an active member of the YWCA. They were a well-matched couple.³ They graduated in 1900 and were married a year later.

Susie was the daughter of Eugene W. Lowell, a wealthy hardware merchant in Janesville, Wisconsin. Records show that she first attended Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, and transferred to the University of Wisconsin as a sophomore. The reference from Northwestern says, "Miss Susie E. Lowell, who has been for one year a regular student in this college, is hereby honorably dismissed at her own request, and commended to any institution with which she may wish to become connected."⁴ It is not clear what intention she might have had in making this transfer, but she must have been quite an independent young woman. As a woman born in the late Victorian era, when women were usually expected to stay home and not go to college, she might have overcome some problems in pursuing her education.

Susie came from a strongly religious background. Her mother Libbie Lowell, nee Cheney, was president of the Methodist Women's Missionary

Society,⁵ and one of Susie's cousins, Ralph Cheney, with whom the Hibbards maintained close contact, was a missionary to Mexico.⁶ The 1902 yearbook of the University of Wisconsin indicates that both were in the College of Letters and Science, Carlisle majored in General Science and Susie in literature. The title of her graduation thesis was "The Character of Joan of Arc as Shown in Schiller's *Jungfrau von Orleans*."⁷ We may imagine her as a young woman with a literary bent who was attracted to one of the most spirited and spiritual women in history.

In this way through her parents Esther was steeped from birth in the value of education, literature and missions. As one of her nieces would write, she was a product of "a long line of well-educated Americans and particularly astute English literature education."⁸

Early Education

Esther's early education in Japan and Manchuria came through home schooling. Her father taught her scientific subjects and her mother taught her English and other subjects as well as housekeeping. Her niece recalls that she said her father was quite strict and rarely gave her high grades.⁹ Without ever receiving formal instruction in the Japanese language, little Esther became completely bilingual and helped her mother by interpreting English to Japanese and vice versa. (Later, after she returned to Japan in her late twenties she would have to work hard to master the language again.)

In 1914, when Esther was ten years old, her father resigned from his position at the YMCA for health reasons. The Hibbards returned to the United States via Siberia and the Atlantic Ocean.

In the United States, the family first settled in Janesville, Wisconsin,

where Esther's maternal grandparents lived. Esther received her middle school education there. They moved to New York in 1917 when her father started working again for the International Committee of the YMCA. In 1920 Esther finished high school with honors in Hastings-On-Hudson, New York, at the age of sixteen.

College Days

Esther decided to attend Mount Holyoke College (on a scholarship) in South Hadley, Massachusetts, located only three hours distance by train from New York.¹⁰ This was the era of the Roaring Twenties. American women had just won suffrage in 1920. As the nation's economy continued to grow at a breakneck pace, new technologies such as electric lights, the telephone, and automobiles were developing rapidly and industries needed women's power. Women's advancement into society far outstripped that of the previous age. Louise Benner (2004) sums up the strides taken by women at this time.

A woman of 1920 would be surprised to know that she would be remembered as a "new woman." Many changes would enter her life in the next ten years. Significant changes for women took place in politics, the home, the workplace, and in education. Some were the results of laws passed, many resulted from newly developed technologies, and all had to do with changing attitudes toward the place of women in society.¹¹

At such an exciting time for women, Esther chose Mount Holyoke, established in 1837 by Mary Lyon as the second women's seminary in the nation, an institution which had sent a number of women missionaries to foreign countries.¹² In her autobiography she said, "I chose Mount Holyoke

because of its high academic standards and its proximity of New York. Its missionary tradition may also have had some weight” (p. 31). Esther started her college life in a dormitory called Judson Hall. She was given a single room and decorated it with Japanese things. In a letter dated Sept. 23, 1920, she wrote, “My room looks very pretty with all the Japanese things. All the girls just rave over the Japanese things. The tea set is set out on top of the book case waiting invitingly to be used.” All her life, whenever and wherever she went, she would continue to decorate her living space with “Japanese things,” a clear indication of the depth of her attachment to the country and its culture. Her letters from college reveal a love of music. She joined the college choir, singing every Sunday morning and at vespers, and received private voice lessons too. Almost every letter describes her joy in singing and listening to beautiful songs. This musical talent stood her in good stand when she became a missionary, as she directed the Girls’ Glee Club at Doshisha and was also often asked to sing at worship services and parties.

Many other extracurricular activities also helped prepare Esther for missionary life. She enjoyed walking, camping and even doing sports, which she claimed she had the least talent for. She learned skating, golfing, dancing, playing tennis, playing cards, etc. She worked for a circle called ICSA (Intercollegiate Community Service Association), an association that did community work in the town of Holyoke, and volunteered to take care of children in a community center for immigrants on the east side of town. Participating in these volunteer activities may have contributed to her willingness to undertake a variety of responsibilities as a young missionary.

III. College Graduation and Finding a Job

The Job Market

Esther majored in English and minored in science and music. In 1924, she received a Bachelor degree *cum laude* in English, with teacher's certificates in English, science and music. Though she was well prepared to take up a teaching career, finding a job as a teacher was by no means easy. Partly this was because of the intense competition. Patricia Graham (1978) reveals the surprising facts that in 1920 only 7.88% of undergraduates nationwide were in the 18-21 age bracket, and 47% of them were women. Thus virtually half of all college students across America were women.¹³ Moreover, Derothy Brown (1987) says, "an overwhelming number of college-educated women continued to elect teaching."¹⁴ The economic situation in this pre-Depression era made the job market even tighter.

In a letter dated April 20, 1924, Esther wrote to her mother how difficult it was to find a teaching position either in music or in English:

I told Miss Wollmann about my prospects of going to Ithaca, and she was most enthusiastic. She said the musical opportunities there would be hard to equal. She knows the supervisor of music, a Miss Bryant personally, and she told me about a fine voice teacher. She thinks I can get a position as soloist in one of the churches there, too. But this is counting the Easter eggs before they're found. If Ithaca fails me, I have another chance to teach English and music in Hawley, Pa. for a salary of \$130-140 a month, for 9 months. The place is near Scranton and it has about 2000 inhabitants.

Teaching High School in Wisconsin

In September 1924 the Hibbards left New York and started living in

Madison, Wisconsin when Carlisle resigned from the national YMCA and became general secretary of the YMCA at the University of Wisconsin. Because of this family move, Esther decided to find a position in Wisconsin. However, as she did not have a Wisconsin teacher's license, she went on to graduate school at the University of Wisconsin to get an MA in English with a teacher's license.

After completing her graduate studies, she was hired as a substitute teacher at Central High School, the largest high school in Madison, and three months later, she was promoted to full-time teacher. The Feb. 11, 1926 edition of *The Madison Mirror*,¹⁵ the school newspaper, notes her arrival at the school and summarizes her background. About a year and a half later, on June 2, 1927, the same newspaper reports her departure:

Miss Esther Hibbard of the English department expects to leave June 28 for a western trip. She will motor with her family to Estes Park, where they will remain for three weeks. Miss Hibbard will then attend summer school at the University of Colorado in Boulder.

Esther actually studied at the University of Colorado from August 1927 to June 1928. For one course, she studied oral interpretation, which she evidently enjoyed very much.¹⁶ Then she went traveling in Europe with her roommate at the University of Colorado, visiting England and Germany.

Decision to Become a Missionary

In a magazine article published in 1930,¹⁷ the middle of her first year as a missionary in Japan, Esther wrote that in her college days the last thing she wanted to be was a missionary: "My friend and I stood as much in dread of being branded the 'missionary type' as we did of the plague."

However, one day at church¹⁸ she listened to talks by two women who were actually serving as missionaries in Turkey and China. In the article, she goes on to explain how their accounts influenced her to change her mind:

After graduation, however, there were a number of forces which began to revolutionize my attitude. In the first place I began to meet some real modern missionaries—Miss Edith Cold of Turkey, and Miss Priscilla Holton, a graduate of my own college who had gone through the same experience of revolt. It was through her in particular that I began to feel a subtle change of method and principle in the missionary enterprise—a change with which I was thoroughly in sympathy.

Then, after I had taught in a large public school for a year or more, a sense of futility of trying to develop character within the narrow limits of the prescribed curriculum struck me irresistibly. Moreover, there were a hundred clamoring for my job while there was perhaps only one willing and able to go to the foreign field. This sense of a vital need was almost determinative.

When I began to think of missionary work, my choice of country naturally fell upon Japan because I was born there and lived among the Japanese people there and in Manchuria for ten years. I felt a keen sympathy for the problems of the race and a love for the people that came from early contacts. This field held out to me an opportunity for vital service where need was most intense.

As mentioned above, Esther was truly impressed by the talk of Miss Holton, who graduated from Mount Holyoke in 1922, only two years senior to Esther. According to the records, Holton taught in New York for one year and then worked for the American Board from 1923 to 1926 in Foochow, China and Mexico.¹⁹ Foochow (presently, Fuzhou) was one of the main cities where the American Board actively participated in mission work and they already had some mission secondary schools and even a

Christian university in 1920.²⁰ So, it is not difficult to think that Esther might have identified with Miss Holton herself and had a positive image of her future work in Japan.

IV. Missionary at the Doshisha

Doshisha and the American Board in the 1930s

In May 1929, Hibbard, as we shall now call her, was appointed by the American Board to be a missionary at the Doshisha in Kyoto for three years, from 1929 to 1932. It was a trial employment; she was not a career missionary yet.

When she came to Kyoto, the Doshisha was already a large educational enterprise consisting of a university, boys' and girls' grammar schools, and a kindergarten. It had a strong relationship with the American Board from the time of its establishment. Joseph Hardy Neesima (1843-90),²¹ the founder of the school and a graduate of Amherst College and Andover Theological Seminary, had become a corresponding missionary of the American Board before returning to Japan. He strongly wanted to build a Christian liberal arts university in Japan, a project which received warm support from the American Board.

Although the Doshisha struggled with the Board during the initial phase, by the time Hibbard arrived, the two organizations were once again on amicable terms.²² Their shared aim was, as Neesima said, "to educate the coming race in higher studies, being influenced by Christian light and Christian conscience."²³

Doshisha history shows that from 1874 to 1935, a total of 115 Board missionaries served at the various schools of the Doshisha.²⁴ In 1925, four years before Hibbard came, there were 19 missionaries in the Doshisha.²⁵

The missionaries' influence in and out of school was profound, especially at Doshisha Girls' School (precursor of Doshisha Women's College of Liberal Arts), where Hibbard was assigned. The girls' school, which started in 1876 with 12 pupils aged 7 to 17, was managed by women missionaries at the beginning — women who not only taught pupils in the day but lived with them around the clock, thus imparting a deeper Christian education than was available in the boys' school. Perhaps it is for that reason the girls' school maintained a stronger tradition of Christian mission and education than did any of the other Doshisha schools.²⁶

Starting Missionary Life

Hibbard's return voyage to her birthplace started aboard the *S.S. President Polk*, which left San Francisco on August 23, 1929. It was a high-speed steamship, crossing the Pacific Ocean and stopping in Japan on its way to China, full of missionaries. On board she met others who were going to teach at or were otherwise related to Doshisha: Donald L. Zoll,²⁷ Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Huntley,²⁸ and Mr. and Mrs. P. Leeds Gulick.²⁹ She occupied herself playing bridge, swimming, and taking care of the Huntley and Gulick children. Her acquaintance with Zoll, a graduate and the student representative of Amherst College to Doshisha, apparently stirred her young heart, but alas, he did not evidently return her interest. In a letter to her father asking what he would think of her going to Manchuria, she wrote:

As for chances of meeting the Ideal Man, I should think Dairen might be just about as good. Besides I have met him right here in Kyoto, but it's nothing to get excited about because he's loads younger than I and no doubt thinks of me as his maiden aunt. And such a pity — when

he's an Alpha Delta, too! The track between Amherst and Mount Holyoke never did run smooth. (Dec. 15, 1929)

Arrival in Japan

The ship, although delayed several hours by a typhoon, docked safely at Kobe on September 13, 1929. Hibbard and her companions were welcomed by a group of missionaries already working in Japan and a Doshisha welcoming committee.

The night before the ship reached Kobe, she wrote, "Tomorrow we land at Kobe and I feel almost as if I were arriving home at last. But it's only home pro tem." (Aug. 31). She vividly described her feeling of homecoming in a letter dated Sep. 16, as follows:

If I should live to be as old as Japan itself, I could never forget the thrill of that ride by night through the streets of Kobe. Any other city would have done as well, no doubt, provided it had been in Japan, for the pleasure came from the thronging echoes of familiar sounds and sights. The diminutive shops all brilliantly lighted, the robed figures, the elaborate head-dresses, the hollow clamor of geta, the daintily latticed doorways all jumbled into a kind of dream-memory.

This lyrical description clearly shows how at home she felt when she encountered typical scenes of ordinary life in Japan.

At School

In Kyoto, Hibbard began to live in a western-style house located next to the old Imperial Palace, sharing it with two American women missionaries: Frances Clapp, a music teacher, and Alice Gwinn, who taught English. They lived with a cook called Mrs. Terachi, her father, and her daughter, Toshiko. Those three lived in a separate house on the same lot. The

house shared by the three missionaries was dubbed "Clappard Inn" after their names, "Clapp," "Hibbard" and "Gwinn." (Dec. 24). Although the women differed strongly in character, they coped together well.

Hibbard taught English literature, English conversation, English composition, and Bible. In addition, she took responsibility for a students' music club and an English speaking club, and also attended camps and retreats. She was also in charge of leading a Bible class at home and teaching English to adult Japanese women at the Kyoto YWCA. She describes her typical day in a letter dated Oct. 13, 1929, as follows:

We start the day with breakfast in bed, simply for expediency's sake because the student helper can then clean the dining room before school hours, and of course we don't mind it either. It saves loads of time—or else it lends wings to my movements, for I've actually robed and emerged from the house in fifteen minutes after getting up! At seven-thirty sharp we leave the house for a ten-minute walk across the park, which is always quiet and dignified and lovely whether luminous with sunbeams or beaded with rain-drops. We pass the birthplace of the first Meiji emperor, which is enclosed in a charming garden of its own. After chapel the day's work begins and runs straight to noon with ten minute intervals. I'm free every afternoon except two and have some classes every morning, even Saturday. It's wonderful to have the unbroken afternoons for tennis or shopping or lesson preparation.

Although many people believe that Hibbard had no difficulty in communicating with Japanese because she was born in Japan and bilingual, it was not true in the beginning. She could not read the language, and she lacked specialized vocabulary. A letter (Oct. 13) describes how she managed the practice of the Girls Glee Club:

It's perfectly ludicrous for me to pretend to lead them because I'm just getting so I can read the "hiragana" in which the words of their songs are written and I can't even find the phrases for "You're off pitch," "Watch the time," or "the sopranos alone" in my otherwise faithful dictionary. I just sing with the girls and try to pantomime any messages I may wish to convey.

Hibbard enjoyed teaching and said, "The girls here are certainly much more in earnest about life than girls their age in America." (Oct. 29) However, she writes how much effort she needed to convey her message :

Laying all self-consciousness and dignity aside, one scrawls a "stop and go" sign in colors on the blackboard and when you hear a giggle, you know they have "caught on" so far. Then you pantomime a person driving past the sign and arm of the law, only to have a heavy hand placed upon his shoulder. By this time a hand waves and the response comes "It's unpleasant to be arrested." The class just roars over my antics; I've imitated ducks, thunder, lions, streetcars, earthquakes, strong men, cicadas, hens, and dogs. I've drawn cartoons of eagles, archers, mirrors, dressers, automobiles, and sewing machines. (Oct. 13)

This account shows her to be an engaging and resourceful teacher, one able to establish rapport with her students through any means possible.

During her first year, Hibbard involved herself in extra-curricular activities as much as possible. For example, she served as a judge for an oratorical contest, had class parties for students, and attended students' farewell parties at the dormitories. She sometimes invited students to her house and served tea and homemade cookies. In this way she learned a great deal about her students and established close relationships with them.

At the same time, Hibbard experienced a little difficulty getting along with the senior missionary teacher at Doshisha Girls' School, Mary Florence Denton (1857-1947).³⁰ When she first met Denton at the

newcomers' reception, she reported to her mother, "She was there and proved not half so formidable as I had feared — merely unusually emphatic in her statements." (Sep. 16). But later when Hibbard wanted to change the English conversation textbook to a more practical one, Denton would not permit her to do so. Also when she was struggling with teaching Bible in English to forty-four Japanese girls, whose religious backgrounds were extremely varied, she thought Bible should be taught in Japanese by a Japanese teacher, though this proposal was also refused. A letter dated June 9, 1930 describes the difficulty of engaging students' minds in a foreign language:

I have been absorbed this weekend in a book on Buddhism by a man named Kenneth Saunders, who has been YMCA student secretary in Rangoon. While he naturally knows most about Burmese conditions he seems to me to have struck conditions here in Japan about right too. At least the evidence from my new Bible class points to the need for filling the vacuum left by the inadequacies of Buddhist thought rather than for actively contesting the system. Of the forty-four girls who gave me the information I asked for — eight declared themselves Christians, six said something like this; "I like very much about Jesus," five said they were "not Christian," nine stoutly declared for Buddhism, and the rest said they had no religion. It would be almost easier if they still believed in the original precepts of Buddha, which are astonishingly like the Gospel in Beatitudes, commandments, and ethical code. But many of their hearts are so steeled with materialism that neither doctrine makes much impression. There are a few wistful faces; it makes me wild that I can't reach the minds back of them through the barrier of language. I do think the class ought to be taught by a Japanese in Japanese, but Miss Denton firmly believes in keeping the English tradition.

It is amazing to read that eight out of forty-four students identified

themselves as Christian, considering that today it would be very difficult to find even one Christian in a 40 student class. Moreover, in a letter dated Dec. 1, 1929, Hibbard reported that 120 students were baptized that morning. She added, "A number of the girls were in my classes, though by far the great majority were from the Domestic Science College, probably due to Miss Denton's influence." In this way Hibbard admitted Denton's power in spite of shrinking from her stubbornness.

As a whole, Hibbard enjoyed teaching. About her students, she commented in moving language how their sincerity toward learning inspired her to reach deeper understanding and know the joy of teaching :

I do love the girls here. Sometimes a wave of tenderness for them just washes over me in class and I almost choke. They give me infinitely more of fresh, live thinking than I even dreamed of from my classes last year. I've been surprised to find so much fun in them, too. They're so responsive for the most part that they sometimes lead me beyond my depth. (Nov. 29)

Hibbard looked stern and strict and she was demanding in class. But she was a person of love who cherished her students and gave them unforgettable memories. Her love of her students lasted until she died. Although she never had a child of her own, she claimed with pride that she was mother to 2000 students.³¹

Contacts Outside School

The depth of Hibbard's contacts is surprising. First, through her parents' YMCA connection, she had lots of "uncles" and "aunts" before she ever landed in Japan. These included: Mr. and Mrs. Phelps (her father's university classmate and a colleague at the YMCA), Mr. and Mrs. J. M.

Davis (YMCA colleague and the son of Dr. Jerome Davis, Doshisha founder), and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Cary (representative of American Board, Japan and a member of the Doshisha Trustees). Some of them often invited her to join them for dinner and vacations. Also her parents' contacts among the YMCA staff helped Hibbard to expand her network of Japanese acquaintances.

First, were contacts going back to her childhood in Japan. In June 1930 she received a letter from her childhood nanny, Ja-ja, or Mrs. Uzawa, for the first time in sixteen years. It was from Ja-ja that she had learned her first Japanese. In early September when Hibbard went to Tokyo, she and Ja-ja first met alone at a hotel, as they had many things to talk over, and then she visited Ja-ja's house to see her family. She had a wonderful time with them, renewing ties and learning first-hand how working class Japanese lived. It must have been a precious experience for Hibbard.

Second, her housemate Alice Gwinn was instrumental in introducing Hibbard to most of the foreigners in the Kyoto area, starting only two weeks after her arrival. September 23, the autumnal equinox, was a national holiday, and a time when foreigners often got together; it was also Hibbard's birthday. In addition, Mrs. Downs, the wife of Rev. Darley Downs,³² a longtime English teacher at Doshisha Junior High School, was due to leave Kyoto soon. Gwinn therefore decided to give the two women a combined farewell, welcome, birthday, and autumnal equinox party. Gwinn invited all the foreigners in town, including practically all the faculty of the Doshisha. As a result, "The tea-reception that afternoon was a great success. Sixty of the eighty invited guests came, so I had a chance to meet almost all the foreign population of Kyoto." (Sep. 30).

Lastly, Hibbard's Japanese teacher, Eiko Takashima, was another

important person in her life. Ms. Takashima took Hibbard to see Kabuki, a form of Japanese drama, which she came to love and respect deeply. Also it should not be forgotten that in 1931 Ms. Takashima made it possible for Hibbard to meet with a Buddhist nun, Abbess Chiko Komatsu of the Jakkoin Temple. This meeting was to have important consequences. After World War II, when the Japanese suffered from severe lack of food, Abbess Komatsu wrote a long letter to General MacArthur asking him to help the people of Kyoto. Miss Hibbard translated the letter, and as a result, Kyoto was provided ample food rations and its citizens were saved from starvation.³³

Cultural Experiences

Miss Hibbard's deep love of Japan was rooted in her love of Japanese culture. As noted above, she always loved Japanese things, starting from her childhood. To an extent unusual in a missionary, she was very much interested in learning Japanese traditional culture and always respected it.

She learned Japanese dramatic arts such as Noh, *Bunraku* or puppet theater, and Kabuki, as well as *koto* music and flower arrangement. After she and Clapp saw a *Bunraku* performance, they decided to make their own puppets. In a letter dated Mar. 23, 1930, she wrote excitedly, "A new era began in our domestic life with our visit to the puppet theater in Osaka. We are going to have a puppet show of our own!" Then, they actually went to a doll store to buy a samurai head and started sewing the body and clothes for the doll. She imagined their show would:

have two or three character—types whom we may dress differently for different stories. Our stage back-drop is a miniature gold screen taken from a doll festival set. . . . It will be an ideal way of

demonstrating Japanese life and folklore when we go back to the States; (Mar. 23)

A few months later, they performed a puppet show at their house using their own handmade puppets with an original script. A letter dated June 29 says :

My marionette is finished and in operation. We've discovered he can "suwaru" (sit) beautifully before a miniature "koto" and tap the strings rhythmically with his hands. We have chosen our first play — translation of a Japanese interlude comedy or "kyōgen." The characters are a Daimyo, a monkey and its leader. I leave it to you to judge which one of us is to take the part of the monkey! It will be fun to work up the play in our leisure time this summer."

Hibbard also enjoyed various Japanese festivals in and out of Kyoto. She visited many places in Japan whenever she had a chance. She made short trips to rural areas near Kyoto. She traveled the Inland Sea, visiting Matsuyama, Beppu, Mount Aso, Kumamoto, and Miyajima. She experienced river rafting on the Hozu River in Kyoto. She climbed Mount Fuji. She visited Karuizawa and Dairen where she had lived in her childhood and noted their growth. Everywhere she went, she experienced Japanese culture fully.

About religion, she was circumspect, and never pushed people to convert to Christianity. Instead she showed sincere respect to existing religions of Buddhism and Shinto. One example of her appreciation of those Japanese spiritual traditions can be seen in a letter dated Sep. 30, 1929, two weeks after her arrival in Japan. Describing a visit to Ise Shrine, the most sacred shrine in Japan, she wrote :

Even though there were crowds there, everything was utterly quiet, and one felt the presence of a sincere worshipful spirit which no one not utterly callous could fail to respect.

In addition, when she stayed in a Japanese inn and experienced various cultural differences such as receiving many respectful prostrations, walking with slippers inside the house, being served a towel wrung out of perfumed water, or bathing in the nude alongside strange women, she never rejected the experiences but enjoyed each occasion.

Relationship with the American Board

In a letter dated March 23, 1930, Hibbard complained of her poor Japanese ability: "I progress very, very slowly with my Japanese. My expressional wants so far exceed my vocabulary and I'm so lacking in wholesome fear and shame that I often get into deep water." She envied Mr. Huntley, who was concentrating on learning Japanese in Tokyo. It seems that in March or so there had been a plan to improve Hibbard's Japanese language ability by sending her to Tokyo. But in a letter dated March 30 she wrote :

And yet I decided against Mr. Downs' proposal that I start my language study in Tokyo next September. In the first place it would mean a definite and final agreement to stay in Japan permanently and in the second place it would mean separation from all the Kyoto life into which I have woven my interests. While as I feel now, I can't imagine wanting to go back to any other kind of work, it's only fair to give it the three years' trial I promised.

This comment shows how earnestly Hibbard tried to settle into life in Kyoto so that she would be successful in building up her own community there.

One day in June, Hibbard attended a mission conference in Arima, Hyogo Prefecture. She attended as an observer because her status in the Board was still on trial. She was invited only to sing at worship, but suddenly the topic of the discussion changed to the issue of her status. She wrote :

The upshot was that the mission has voted to urge me to apply for permanent appointment as teacher of English at Doshisha. While that still leaves the decision open to me, it assures me of a welcome if I do decide to stay and prevents having my place filled by someone else, a possibility which for a while was imminent. (June 3)

This development shows that after just nine months, Hibbard had won respect for the high quality of her work as an educational missionary, and the mission wanted her to stay on permanently in Japan. However, she showed strong resistance to making a decision without any prior consultation.

Hibbard's hesitation about whether she should stay on in Japan as a permanent missionary lasted until just before her departure on her first furlough home. The Board requested her repeatedly to stay in Japan and she herself had a strong desire to do so because of her deep attachment to Japanese culture, as well as her love of her work. But at the same she wanted to return home for good because she knew her mother was expecting her and needed her help. For a long time she could not make up her mind, and she kept seesawing between staying in Japan and going back to the States.

V. Concluding Remarks

Hibbard's first year in Japan was a remarkable success. Everything was

new and exciting. At the same time, Japan was by no means a strange place to her. It was after all the land of her birth and as she said at the beginning, she felt immediately at home there. Her teaching was a source of great joy and satisfaction. Her language skills, while not perfect, helped her to adjust. Adding to her parents' old acquaintances, she expanded her network by meeting many new people both in and out of school and experienced various aspects of traditional Japanese culture.

In a letter to her father dated Dec. 15, 1929, Hibbard expresses joy and contentment in her life in Japan :

Do you think it terribly beastly of me never to have been in the least homesick? I can't describe the feeling I had about getting back other than as having slipped into a groove that I fitted. Far from needing to adjust myself, physically as well as spiritually I have never felt such well-being. And how much of this taking root I owe to your early training of me! I probably can never guess. I know, too, how much I owe to you and Mother who have let me come.

Acknowledging her parents' gifts of early training and continuing support, she did not forget to make efforts herself. She never missed a chance to cultivate herself and tried to learn as much as possible. That is doubtless what enabled her to settle down to life in Kyoto so smoothly.

Then, as this fruitful first year drew to a close, what would follow? As a letter of March 30, 1930 says, "... I can't imagine wanting to go back to any other kind of work." Indeed, she would be assigned as a permanent missionary to Japan in two years. However, soon the effects of the Great Depression began to appear, and Japan was gradually sliding into a dark era of dictatorial repression. She was bound to face even more challenging difficulties in her continuing service.

Her autobiography describes that when she landed in Japan, "I said to myself, 'I'm home; this is my country,' but not realizing what a boastful claim that was [underlined by the author] (p. 31)," which suggests she understood how much of Japan was still beyond her comprehension.

In the next paper I will examine how she coped with and established her steady career as an educational missionary in Japan before the onset of World War II.

Notes :

1. The first American Christian foreign mission agency. It was proposed in 1810 by recent graduates of Williams College and officially chartered in 1812. In 1961 it merged with other societies to form the United Church Board for World Ministries.
2. Carlisle V. Hibbard Papers, 1811-1954: (Call number: Wis Mss QN; PH 1556). The Archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society. They were donated by Mrs. Carlisle Hibbard, for the commemoration of her husband when he died in 1954.
3. Esther's letter dated Sep. 7, 1930 reveals that Mr. Sidney Phelps, her father's university classmate, said to Hibbard, "... how the setting-up conference you [Susie] and Dad [Carlisle] were the most striking couple there; you with your girlish dimples—which I assured him you still had—Father with his dashing air and erect courage. He told me—to my delight amusement—of Dad's 'not' about the 'honeymoon being on its last quarter,' but these are positively all the skeletons he would unlock though I tried every key I possessed." (Sep. 7, 1930)
4. In a file of University of Wisconsin Students' Records, located at the University Archives and Records Management Services of the University of Wisconsin.
5. Esther Lowell Hibbard. *"And Gladly Teche" Memories of a Missionary Kid* November, 1988. unpublished book, p. 1.
6. Correspondences between Paul S. Smith (a letter dated Dec. 8, 1950) and Carlisle (a return letter dated Dec. 19, 1950). Carlisle V. Hibbard Papers, 1811-1954, Box 5. The Archives of the Wisconsin Historical Society.
7. University of Wisconsin Year Book 1902. Commencement of Year 1900.

- Under Graduates, College of Letters and Science, p. 57.
8. Sally Hibbard Lawson. 2002. "A bright light with a firm foundation". In *Shu no Megumiwa Tsukirukotoganai: Esuta L. Hibado Sensei Tsuitō Kinenshū* (His Goodness Faileth Never: A Memorial Book of Dr. Esther L. Hibbard) Editorial committee for the Memorial Book of Dr. Esther L. Hibbard (Eds.). Kyoto: Naigai Insatsu. pp. 277-280.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Esther Lowell Hibbard. "*And Gladly Teche*" *Memories of a Missionary Kid* November, 1988. unpublished book, p. 31.
11. Louise Benner, 2004. "A New Woman Emerges" *NCpedia*, (<http://ncpedia.org>), Reprinted with permission from the *Tar Heel Junior Historian*. Spring 2004. Tar Heel Junior Historian Association, NC Museum of History.
12. Sherrie A. Inness (1994) claims that Mount Holyoke was a "missionary factory," and from 1837 to 1887, 178 Mount Holyoke students became missionaries to foreign lands (p. 368).
13. Patricia A. Graham. 1978. "Expansion and Exclusion: A History of Women in American Higher Education" *Signs*, Vol. 3, No. 4 (Summer, 1978), p. 766.
14. Dorothy M. Brown. 1987. *Setting a Course: American Women in the 1920s*. Twayne Publishers; Boston. P. 151.
15. "The Madison Mirror" was a student newspaper published 1854-1969 by Central High School in Madison, Wisconsin. It was published bimonthly during fall and spring terms. Its complete set (1924-1969) is online at Dane County Historical Society, <http://www.danecountyhistory.org/mirror/mirror/MADIMI-RR/index.pdf>
16. Esther's letters from July 1927 to August 1928 show that she was in the University of Colorado and that after finishing there she traveled to Europe, but they do not disclose why she went to Colorado or what she studied explicitly aside from oral interpretation, about which she comments "I had a tremendous thrill in oral interpretation class . . . the instructor spoke about the beautiful tonal quality of Christina Rossetti's poetry." (Aug. 20, 1927). She mostly reports what she did on weekends or holidays.
17. Esther L. Hibbard. 1930. "Student Movement Outposts," [Unknown magazine] January 1930, p. 117.
18. Esther was a member of First Congregational Church, Madison, Wisconsin at that time. She transferred from the Dutch Reformed Church in Hastings-on-

- Hudson, New York to Frist Congregational in 1925.
19. Priscilla Holton, graduate of Mount Holyoke College (1922). <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/~dalbino/photos/jcline/women/pholton.html>
 20. *The Annual Report of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions* (1920) describes that the educational opportunity in China was prosperous and the work in the city of Foochow was one of the examples. (pp. 53-55).
 21. Joseph Hardy Neesima was born in 1843 in Edo (now Tokyo) as a son of samurai. Realizing the importance of learning about Western countries, he left Japan for the United States even though travel abroad was then a capital crime. He reached the United States and was sent to school under the support of Mr. Alpheus Hardy, a successful Boston businessman, an orthodox Congregationalist, and a member of the Board of Trustee at Amherst College. Neesima was baptized, went to seminary, and was ordained as a Protestant minister in 1874. On November 29, 1875, he opened Doshisha Eigakko, or Doshisha Training School (now Doshisha University), in Kyoto. He was aided by Kakuma Yamamoto, the former Kyoto prefectural adviser, and Rev. Jerome Davis, an American Board missionary. Neesima died in 1890 at age 47.
 22. According to *Doshisha hyakunenshi tsūshihen* (A Centennial History of the Doshisha: General History), in the Taisho period (1912-26) Doshisha was equipped better than before in education and finance, and missionaries were expected to be experts in certain specific areas and to be co-workers of Japanese teachers. (p. 970). The history further describes the early Showa period (around 1926-40) as an innovative era for the development of international exchange programs at Doshisha. (pp. 1009-1011).
 23. Neesima's last letter written in English, dated January 5, 1890. In *The Complete Works of Joseph Hardy Neesima*. Vol. 6. 1985, p. 368.
 24. *Doshisha hyakunenshi tsūshihen* (A Centennial History of the Doshisha: General History), p. 694.
 25. *The One Hundred and Tenth Annual Report of the American Board Commissioners for Foreign Missions*. 1920, pp. 174-175. Retrieved from Google Books, <http://books.google.com/>.
 26. Sakamoto (1999) describes that when Doshisha Girls' School was established, it was also called "Kyoto Home" by the American Board. It was because women missionaries, who administered girls' schools, believed that a girls'

school should be a boarding school like a home where students learn Christian values and ways of living not only in class but also through their daily lives by living with the missionaries. In other words, students in the Girls' School received very thorough Christian trainings at school. This was a big difference from the styles of education in the boys' school.

27. Fifth and seventh Amherst College student representative (1929-31) and (1932-33). In "History of Amherst College and Japan" (<https://www.amherst.edu/academiclife/departments/asian/Amherst-Japan>), Ray Moore says, "Amherst ties with Doshisha from the 1890s to the 1940s were strengthened by a few alumni who served as American Board missionaries at this Japanese Christian institution, and by Amherst student representatives at Doshisha. In 1932, Amherst House, a student residence hall, was built on Doshisha University campus as a memorial to Neesima and Nichols, [the first student representative] who died at a young age."
28. Born in 1902 in China, graduated from Oberlin College and the University of Chicago. Ph. D. From 1929 to 1938, he taught at Doshisha University and at Kyoto Imperial University. He was also professor of English at the University of Michigan (1945-73). <http://um2017.org/faculty-history/faculty/frank-livingstone-huntley/memoir>
29. An American Board missionary to Japan (1894-1975). He first taught at a high school in Matsuyama from 1924, but after World War II, he taught theology at Doshisha University. His father, Rev. Sidney L. Gulick (1860-1945) was also a missionary and taught at Doshisha from 1903 to 1913. *Doshisha hyakunenshi*, p. 973.
30. Denton came to Japan in 1888 as an American Board missionary and served at Doshisha, especially Doshisha Girls' School, for about 60 years. Her devotion to and love of Doshisha were inestimable. She was called the "Doshisha Treasure" and died in Kyoto in 1947 at age 90.
31. Yamazaki (2002) recalls that one day when he visited Dr. Hibbard in Claremont, CA, she said, "I'm a rabbit." When he asked what she meant, she explained she was a rabbit to have borne 2000 children and enjoy watching their growth.
32. Rev. Darley Downs (1894-1969). He taught English at Doshisha grammar school from 1919 to 1929 and was secretary for the American Board Japan from 1926-1934 and 1935 to 1941. He received his Doctor of Divinity from Doshisha in 1963.

33. Yamazaki disclosed this heartwarming hidden story between Dr. Hibbard and Abbes Komatsu, when he gave a memorial address in the memorial service for the late Dr. Hibbard at Doshisha in 1999. Cf. Yamazaki. (2002) *Tsuitō no Kotoba* (Memorial Address). In *Shu no Megumiwa Tsukurukotoganai: Esuta L. Hibado Sensei Tsuitō Kinenshou* (His Goodness Faileth Never: A Memorial Book of Dr. Esther L. Hibbard) Editorial committee for the Memorial Book of Dr. Esther L. Hibbard (Eds.). Kyoto: Naigai Insatsu. pp.13-15.

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